United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council unanimously condemns decision of Israel to deport twelve Palestinians from occupied Palestinian territories.

- Secretary-General strongly deplores killing of Dr. Marta Pumpalova, UNICEF consultant in Somalia, in incident yesterday in Bossaso; Under-Secretary General James Jonah, who is in Somalia to hold talks with Somali officials, oversees the evacuation of body to Nairobi, Kenya.

- Secretary-General views with deep concern deportations by Israel of Palestinians from occupied territories; calls on Israeli authorities to reconsider their decision.

- Secretary-General says he intends to send 50 United Nations military liaison officers to Yugoslavia on assumption of lasting cease-fire and that other conditions for deployment of peace-keeping force will be met.

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The Security Council today strongly condemned the recent decision of Israel to deport twelve Palestinian civilians from the occupied Palestinian territories.

At a meeting this evening, the Council unanimously adopted a resolution reaffirming the applicability of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in time of war to all the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem.

By its decision, the Council further requested Israel, the occupying power, to refrain from deporting any Palestinian civilians from the occupied territories and to ensure the safe and immediate return to the occupied territories of all those deported.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has strongly deplored the killing of Dr. Marta Pumpalova, a UNICEF consultant in Somalia, during an incident

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that took place on 5 January in the town of Bossaso, in the northern part of the country. Dr. Pumpalova was serving in Somalia as part of UNICEF's efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to the Somali people.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents that a report had been send to his office by the UNICEF office in Nairobi describing the "extremely serious" incident and highlighting dangers encountered by United Nations staff engaged in humanitarian operations in strife-torn areas.

According to the report, the incident was "evidently premeditated", as reflected by the calm and unhurried manner in which it was executed in public.

The body of Mrs. Pumpalova was brought to Nairobi by an aircraft of Under-Secretary-General James O.C. Jonah who is currently in Somalia.

In a related development, a team of United Nations senior officials is currently in Mogadiscio for talks in bringing about a cessation of hostilities in that city. The team, which began its mission on 3 january, is led by Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Question, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, James O.C. Jonah.

Mr. Jonah met with Somali officials to consider the question of humanitarian assistance and ways of improving the capacity of the international community to deliver humanitarian assistance now. The Somali side stressed that, while there should be no interference in the international affairs of the United Somali Congress (USC), the United Nations had a constructive role to play in bringing about national reconstruction.

Mr. Jonah interrupted his programme yesterday when hearing about the killing of the UNICEF official and traveled to Bossaso where he declared evacuation of the wounded and dead a top priority.

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The Secretary-General has stated that he views the Israeli deportation of the 12 Palestinians with deep concern and has called on the Israeli authorities to reconsider their decision.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said that at a time when efforts were under way to sustain momentum in the Middle East peace process, he hoped that all sides would refrain from acts that could serve only to heighten tension in the area and undermine the confidence that was so essential to any effective negotiating process.

The statement was issued by the Spokesman's office following a meeting between the Secretary-General and the Permanent Observer of Palestine, Nasser Al-Kidwa, on the question of the deportation orders.

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The Secretary-General today reported to the Security Council that he intends to send a group of 50 United Nations military liaison officers to Yugoslavia immediately, as a follow-up to his Personal Envoy's latest mission to that country.

The Secretary-General met over the weekend with his Personal Envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance, who had just returned from his fifth visit to Yugoslavia.

In his report to the Security Council, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said that there had been, in recent days, "a glimmer of hope" that the situation in Yugoslavia might improve. A larger United Nations operation would be deployed once the cease-fire, hopefully quickly, had established itself.

The military liaison officers would be drawn from existing peace-keeping operations and would be attached to the general headquarters of the Yugoslav National Army and the Croatian People's Guard and to their field headquarters. They would use their good offices to promote maintenance of the cease-fire by facilitating communication between the two sides and by helping them to resolve difficulties that might arise.

The Secretary-General further emphasized that, as had repeatedly been stated, a United Nations peace-keeping force could not be established in Yugoslavia without sustained evidence of the willingness and ability of the leaders on both sides to ensure that the cease-fire was respected.

In an annex to his report devoted to the humanitarian situation in Yugoslavia, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said the number of persons displaced by the conflict was now estimated to be in excess of 600,000 and continued to increase. He said that Mr. Vance, during his mission, had received assurances from Serbian and Croatian authorities that they would fully respect the right of displaced persons to return to their homes.

Following his meeting with the Secretary-General on Saturday, Mr. Vance said he would be in touch with the Yugoslav parties with a view to encouraging them to continue to respect the cease-fire.

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